Neko no Machi no Ko

by Morie Satoshi

Chapter 3

The End

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HEY, HEY, ICHII.
WHAT IS IT, SHIRO?
SPEAK A BIT MORE SOFTLY
OR MOTHER WILL NOTICE, OKAY?
.....
EVEN IF I CAN SNEAK OUT,
SHE'LL GET MAD WHEN I COME BACK.
THE TEA DISTRICT THAT LOOKS LIKE IT HAS BEEN PRESERVED FROM LONG AGO,
IS VISITED BY PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BE CUT OFF FROM EVERYDAY LIFE
AND GO TO AN UNUSUAL DIMENSION.

猫の街の子

第3話

Neko no Machi no Ko

Chapter 3

IN A TOWN WHERE A LOT OF STRAY CATS LIVE A CARE-FREE LIFE,
THERE IS A CHILD WHO LIVES AMONG THEM.
HIS MOTHER SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED ONE DAY.
POP
AND THAT ABANDONED KID
FOUND A WHITE CAT WHO HAD ALSO LOST HER OWN CHILDREN.
MEOW
NOW, HE'S WATCHED OVER BY THE TOWNSPEOPLE
AND IS LIVING WITH HIS NEW MOTHER CAT LIKE A REAL FAMILY.
Aw! Shira-chan!
SO BEAUTIFUL
I'LL GIVE IT TO MOM.

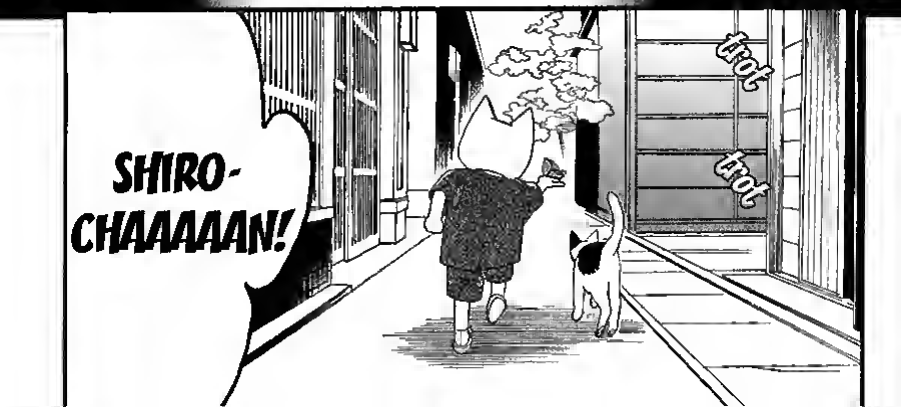
Ichi!!
Here
WEAR THIS!
To let them know you're staff
AWARAYA
AWARAYA
SO MERCILESS..
HAD A DATE WITH THE BOY IN THE CANDY SHOP...
SOMEONE TOLD METHAT THE GIRL STAYING AT THE KIZUYA
While as a guide
The only one cought
RING
THE PHONE
DAMN
PHEW
HE SAID THAT IF I TELL YOU "BARON," YOU'LL KNOW WHO IT IS...
What kind of acquaintances do you have?

EH...?
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, ICHII.
...YES
YES.
YES, YES
Tea.
CLICK
AS FAR BACK AS I CAN REMEMBER, MY FIRST LOVE WAS AT 12 YEARS OLD.

IT WAS A GIRL WHO CAME HERE TO SIGHT-SEE.
WHAT HAPPENED?
I'M LOST.
I DON'T WANT TO WALK ANY-MORE.. MY FEET HURT.
WHY DON'T YOU ASK SOME-ONE THEN?
I'M TOO SHY..
You're too old for that.
chuckle
THEN, THE SEASONS PASSED.

I'VE LOOKED BACK ON THOSE DAYS, BUT THE IMAGE ISN'T CLEAR TO ME ANY-MORE.
MY FIRST BROKEN HEART WAS AT 13 YEARS OLD. IT WAS THE SAME GIRL.

NOW, I WOULDN'T EVEN BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE HER IN A CROWD.



What's that headgear?
AHH, IT'S BEEN SO LONG, SHIRO-CHAAAAN!
SO CUTE! CAN I TAKE A PICTURE?
She's already taking them.
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
UH
I CAME HERE LAST YEAR.
DO YOU REMEMBER ME?
Aaah...
run
run
Tark
DON'T YOU REMEMBER...?
I'M YOUR DARLING ONEE-SAN!
BUT LAST YEAR WAS THE FIRST TIME WE MET.
WELL, I'M HERE EVERY YEAR.
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK

THUD
UH
WHAT IS IT, SHIRO?
ICHI!!
Shiro is down here
OH! ICHII-SAN.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME
Hmph
AH, I'M GLAD THAT YOU REMEMBER ME.
Is that okay?
Welcome
IT'S BECAUSE YOU GO AND SEE THE FESTIVAL EVERY YEAR.
BUT AS I THOUGHT, SHIRO-CHAN DOESN'T REMEMBER.
Ichii?

HERE, SHIRO, CAN YOU SEE?
A woman till the end.
I BROUGHT LAST YEAR'S PHOTOS.
UM, WHERE ...
Rummage
Rummage
HERE!
AH, BY THE WAY!
...HE DID FORGET.
AH, SHIRO, DO YOU REMEMBER THIS?
SHIRO-CHAN, THIS IS ME! TRY TO REMEMBER!
Meow
Rustle
Rustle
He seems interested

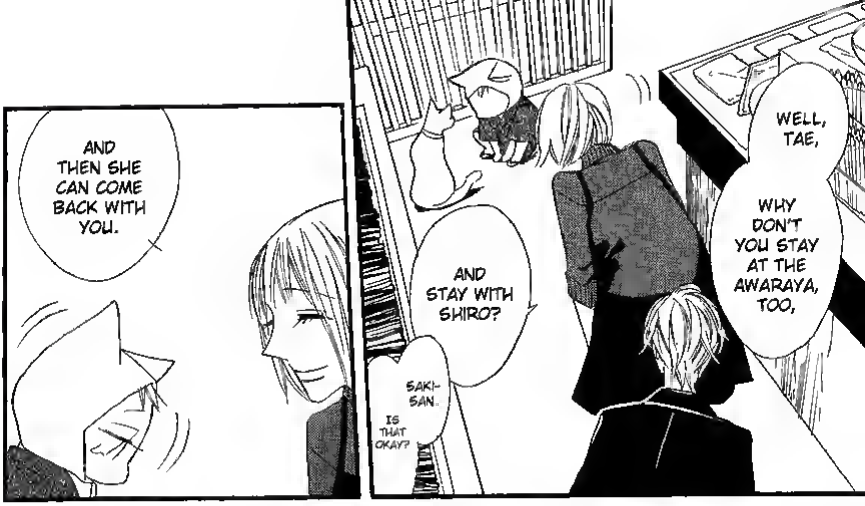
Jump
AH, IT'S OKAY!
I'M SORRY, HE DROPPED THEM.
I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO SHIRO-CHAN...
SHIRO?
RUN

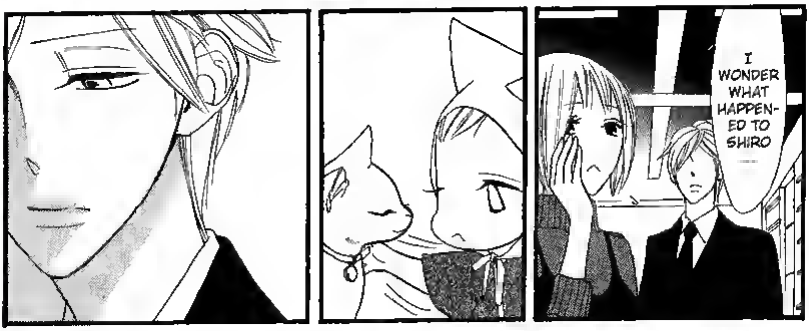
SHI-
RO...
The garden party in the spring
← Ichii
MOM, I'M NOT COMING BACK TODAY.
WHAT?
AGAIN?
HIT
OKAY

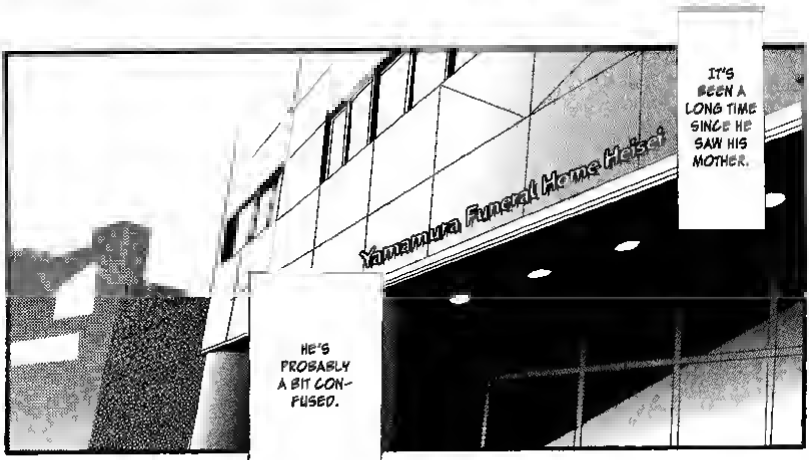
HAVE A SAFE TRIP.
PLEASE TELL SHIRO-CHAN.
OKAY.
MAY I COME IN?
Yuuka
IS SHIRO HERE?
Run Run Run
Stare
Stare Stare
?
Stare
OH, SHIRO.
?
SHI-RO?
ARE YOU CONFUSED BECAUSE I LOOK DIFFER-ENT?

SHIRO. SHIRO, PLEASE LISTEN.
NO!
I CAN'T PICK YOU UP TODAY.
SO PLEASE GO HOME BY YOURSELF, OKAY?
Look at me!
MEOW?
SHI- RO?
NO!
Hmph
DON'T STAY UP LATE, OKAY?

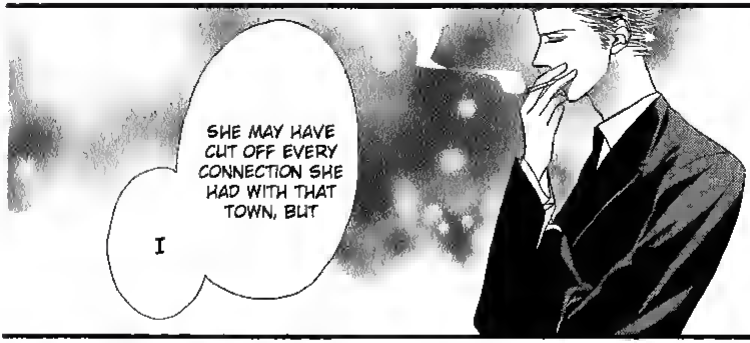
NO...
...SHI-RO,
IF YOU HOLD TAE-SAN TOO TIGHTLY, SHE MIGHT GET HURT.
NO ONE IS GOING TO LEAVE YOU ALONE, SHIRO.
YOU'LL SPEND THE NIGHT WITH MY PARENTS.
I'm looking forward to it.
Shiro's
No! No!
Thud
What?!


AND THEN SHE CAN COME BACK WITH YOU.
SAKI-SAN. IS THAT OKAY?
AND STAY WITH SHIRO?
WELL, TAE, WHY DON'T YOU STAY AT THE AWARAYA, TOO,


I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO SHIRO


Yamamura Funeral Home Hakai
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE HE SAW HIS MOTHER.
HE'S PROBABLY A BIT CONFUSED.

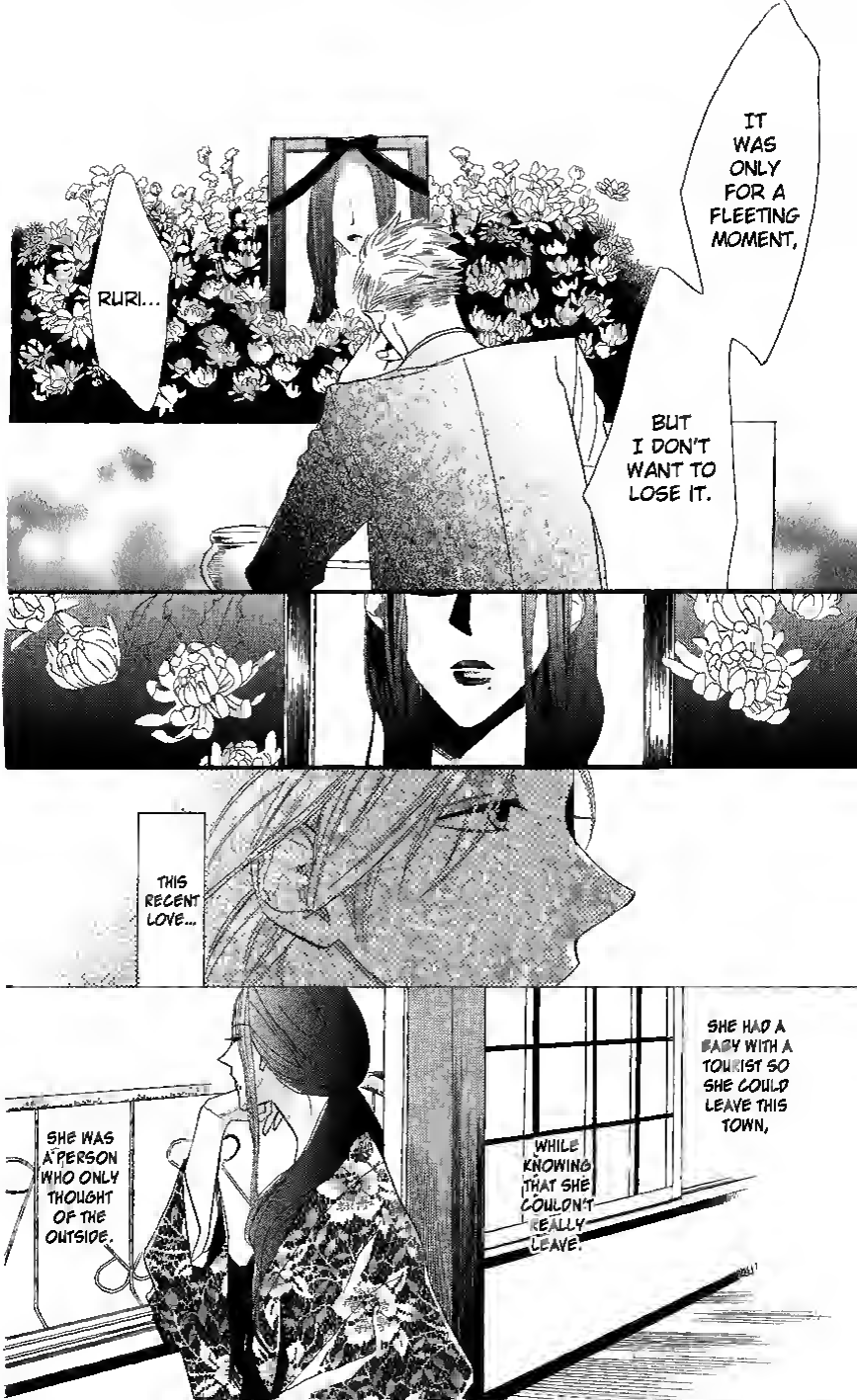
THIS MAN CAME TO OUR TOWN AS A TOURIST A WHILE AGO.
NO.
YOU TOOK CARE OF HER...
I WASN'T SURE ABOUT CONTACTING YOU.
THANK YOU FOR COMING HERE.
"THERE WAS A CAT AT MY PLACE THAT WAS ABOUT TO DIE."
ITS FUR WAS BLACK.
IT HAD A PATTERN ON ITS MOUTH.
A CAT THAT WASN'T ATTACHED TO ANYONE.
THE FACT THAT IT MADE ME THINK OF "HER"
MADE ME REALIZE
THAT I COULDN'T FORGET HER
...NO,
THAT'S NOT IT.


SHE MAY HAVE CUT OFF EVERY CONNECTION SHE HAD WITH THAT TOWN, BUT
I

DON'T WANT THAT CHILD TO FORGET HER.

ALTHOUGH SHIRO ALREADY HAS A CUTE MOTHER NOW,
BUT FOR THAT CHILD, HER MEMORY IS NOTHING BUT PAINFUL.
SHE ABANDONED SHIRO FOR HIS OWN SAKE.

I DON'T WANT HIM TO FORGET HER.
EVEN IF SHE WANTS HIM TO.
...YOU WANT ME TO TELL SHIRO?
YOU MAY BE ON HER SIDE, BUT
I...
I...
... EVEN THEN,


RURI...
IT WAS ONLY FOR A FLEETING MOMENT,
BUT I DON'T WANT TO LOSE IT.
THIS RECENT LOVE...
SHE WAS A PERSON WHO ONLY THOUGHT OF THE OUTSIDE.
WHILE KNOWING THAT SHE COULDN'T REALLY LEAVE.
SHE HAD A BABY WITH A TOURIST SO SHE COULD LEAVE THIS TOWN,

SHIRO, WHERE IS YOUR MOM?
SHE WENT SHOPPING.
Mother turtle
MOM SAID I CAN'T GO BEYOND THE BRIDGE...
Shake
SHIRO, DO YOU WANT TO GO, TOO? I'LL TAKE YOU.

EVEN WITH PEOPLE RETURNING FROM THE CITY AREA AND CROSSING THE BRIDGE,
CROSSING THE BRIDGE LEADS TO A CITY NEARBY,
BUT SHIRO HAS NO INTENTION OF CROSSING IT.
SHIRO DOESN'T GO.
LOOKING AT HER FROM THE SIDE AS SHE GAZED FAR AWAY.
BUT I COULDN'T HELP BUT BE FASCINATED BY
I KNOW THAT.
THAT WOMAN WAS AN AWFUL MOTHER.
Whoosh
Step

*NOTE. IT IS A JAPANESE SUPERSTITION THAT IF YOU GO TO A FUNERAL, YOU SHOULD THROW SALT OVER YOURSELF BEFORE RE-ENTERING YOUR HOME. THIS IS BELIEVED TO BE CLEANSING.

OH, ICHII-KUN.
yuuka
Yuuka
JUST AS I SAID I WASN'T GONNA GO LOOK FOR HIM...
AT LEAST SHE COULD HAVE LET ME CHANGE CLOTHES.
Salt
Ah, THOSE GIRLS...
KYA
KYA
DON'T LOOK SO DEJECTED.
..AH, SEIZOU-SAN..

The birth of the cat town

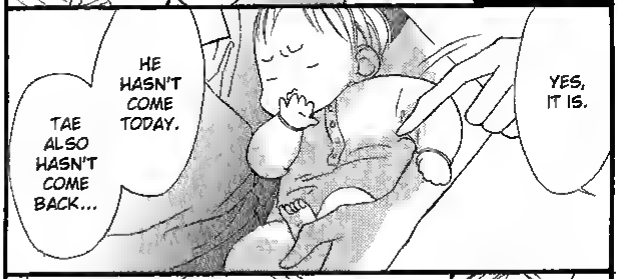
The topic, "a city where you can meet cats," occurred to me while I was watching a TV program. It was so long ago so I don't remember it much

Then, when my boss told me, "Why not draw a manga with a child as the lead character?" this material came out of my mind.

So I made a story about an old-style town with cats and the people in it

While I was writing the first chapter, my sister gave birth to my nephew, and I think the fact that I was playing with him shows in every aspect of this work.

Even though children are small, they weigh a lot



I...
WHERE DID HE GO?
HE WENT THAT WAY.
PLEASE TELL SHIRO-CHAN THAT HE'S WELCOME TO COME ANYTIME.
I'm counting on you.
I UNDERSTAND
THANK YOU VERY MUCH
WHOOSH

I HELPED HER GET OUT OF THIS TOWN
BECAUSE I WANTED HER, THE WOMAN I LOVED, TO BE A GOOD MOTHER.
BUT SHE ABANDONED SHIRO...
"SHE LEFT SHIRO BEHIND BECAUSE
SHE COULDN'T BEAR TO END HER LIFE IN THAT TOWN KNOWING ABOUT HER ILLNESS.
SHE WANTED SHIRO TO KNOW HER AS A BAD MOTHER SO HE CAN FORGET HER,
FOR HIS OWN SAKE."
"YOU'RE ON HER SIDE, AREN'T YOU?"
SHOULD I TELL ALL THIS, RIGHT DOWN TO HIS MOTHER'S DEATH,
KNOWING ALL THAT,
TO SHIRO?

WHOSE SIDE AM I ON...?
EXCUSE ME!
COULD YOU TAKE A PICTURE?
Farce
OF COURSE, MISS
THANK YOU!

I'M A FRIEND.
Smile
IF YOU'RE SEARCHING FOR SHIRO-CHAN, TRY THE ASAGO RIVER
Come on, take it quickly.
COME BACK AGAIN WITH SHIRO-CHAN.
Taking photos is allowed.
OHOHO, SHIRO?
I SAW HIM THERE.
Meow
?

East Kanazawa Police Station
Asago River Bridge Police Box
AH, ICHII-SAN.
HELLO.
Heh Heh
IT'S ABOUT SHIRO-CHAN, ISN'T IT?
AH,
TAE-SAN.
Meow
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YESTER-DAY.
WHERE IS SHIRO...?

HEY.
Hmm
SHIRO, COME OUT.
Gasp
ICHII...?
THAT'S RIGHT.

WHAT WERE YOU DOING THERE?
PAT
PLAYING HIDE AND SEEK?
PAT
Meow
Meow
Finally 3 generations

SHI-RO...
WERE YOU PER-HAPS
WAITING FOR ME?
Meow
Meow
No!
REALLY?
I THINK IT WAS CAUSE YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHEN I'D BE BACK CAUSE I'M WEARING FUNERAL CLOTHES
Pant
Pant
FUNER-AL?
THEY'RE CLOTHES WORN AT SAD TIMES.

ICHII, ARE YOU SAD?
I'M FINE.
BE-CAUSE SHIRO AND TAE-SAN ARE WITH ME.
WELL, TAE-SAN HAS TO GO HOME NOW.
MEOW.
MOM...

SHIRO,
I'LL BE HERE, YOU KNOW
MOM...
Meow
WELL...
WHEN I TALK ABOUT SHIRO,
EVERYBODY SMILES.
I'M HAPPY THAT HE BRINGS HAPPINESS.
SHIRO. SHIRO, JUST BE PATIENT TODAY.
AND IN RETURN...
WHAT WAS I CONFUSED ABOUT?

I'LL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO LIKE YOU.
AHH
Father's back
Crossword puzzle
Awa
MOTHER, FATHER
Shiro

FROM NOW ON,
I WILL MOVE ON WITH THE FULL INTENTION
OF BEING THE HEIR OF THIS SHOP.
I'M HOPING FOR YOUR GUIDANCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT.
What... All of a sudden...
Who are you...?
Ichii
I WANT TO BUILD CONFIDENCE
FOR THE FUTURE
Serious face
AND FOR THAT, I THINK IT IS NECESSARY TO FULFILL MY RESPONSIBILITIES.

SHIRO-CHAN.
Skipping
PLEASE DON'T UTTER THINGS THAT WOULD LEAD TO MIS-UNDER-STAND-INGS
AH, I GET IT!
DID YOU HAVE A BABY?!
MEOW.
WHAT HAPPEN-ED?
YOU SEEM SO HAPPY.
It's Kano-san

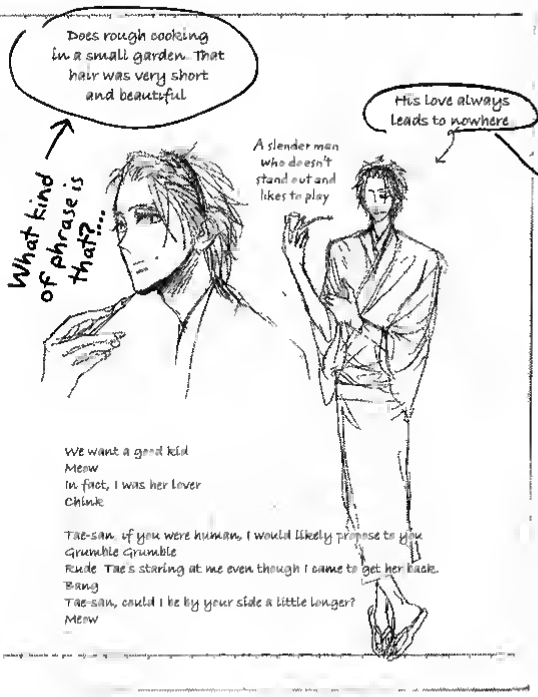
I'M NOT PLANNING ON TELLING HIM.
SHIRO'S REAL MOTHER DIED THE OTHER DAY.
TAE-SAN,
EXCUSE ME.
GYAAAAAA
WHOA!
IS IT OKAY IF I BORROW TAE-SAN?
OH, ICHI-KUN?
IT'S OKAY

BUT THAT'S NOT A PROBLEM FOR THOSE WHO ARE DEAD.
DEATH CAN HEAVILY DRAG YOU DOWN.
SHIRO IS STILL CONFUSED.
BEING ABANDONED, ALONG WITH HIS MOTHER'S DEATH,
BRINGS CONFUSION.
FOR BOTH BAD AND GOOD TIMES,
TIME DILUTES OUR MEMORIES.

WILL BE ABLE TO CROSS THAT BRIDGE
AND WHEN SHIRO
IS SOME-THING THAT I'M NOT SURE ABOUT.
I'M SHIRO'S FRIEND.
I WANT SHIRO TO GROW UP WITHOUT WORRIES
AND FOR THAT, I NEED YOU.
Glance

COME AND VISIT ONE OF THESE DAYS, OKAY?
SO PLEASE,
Meow.
AH! ICHII-SAN.
HIS LOVE ALWAYS LEADS TO NO-WHERE.
= "Too" is not needed =
AND YOU BROUGHT A CUTE LADY WITH YOU TO-DAY, TOO!

CHAPTER 3 / END


Does rough cooking in a small garden. That hair was very short and beautiful
His love always leads to nowhere
A slender man who doesn't stand out and likes to play
What kind of phrase is that?...
We want a good kid
Meow
In fact, I was her lover
Chink
Tae-san, if you were human, I would likely propose to you
Grumble Grumble
Rude. Tae's staring at me even though I came to get her back.
Bang
Tae-san, could I be by your side a little longer?
Meow

The early designs of the characters came out!

This appeared as the opening line.

I'm glad I got to write more.

Shiro! Who are you?!

Omake

The character introduction during the magazine publication.

IGHII... A GIRLY AND USELESS HEIR OF A CANDY SHOP. TAKES CARE AND GETS TAKEN CARE OF BY SHIRO.

I really like this. Thank you so much Editor-san. I laughed.